



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



AN AMERICAN LANDSCAPIST.

BY ALEXANDER BLACK.

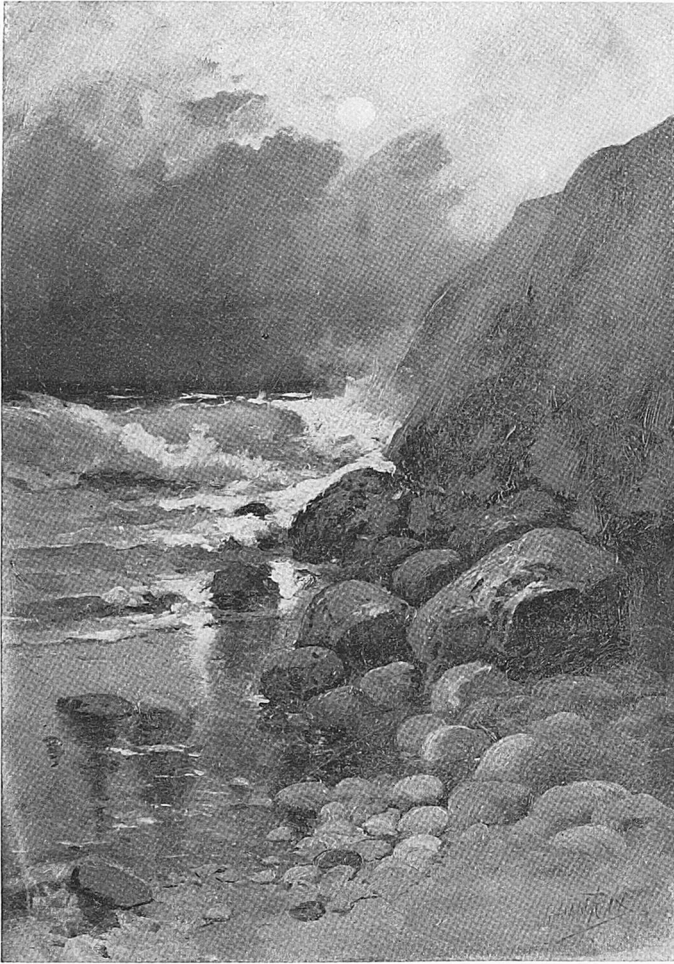
(With original illustrations by Julian Rix.)

THE development of American art within recent years has been marked by no phase more cheering and prophetic than the steady improvement of quality in landscape. We still have artists who go abroad and come home with the blues—or the pale grays, as the case may be—and who seem for a time to have made up their minds to paint Seine boats and Brittany mud-puddles for the rest of their natural lives. But these, happily, are outnumbered by the men who paint American landscape, not because there is really any such thing as patriotism in subject, any geography in sentiment, but because American landscape is the landscape they actually know most about, and because painting Brittany is a temptation to thinking Brittany.

Among the American artists to whom we most naturally turn for an expression of American art ideas and ideals is Julian Rix. If, as I have suggested, there is no such thing as nationality in art, there is such a thing as a national temper—a quality which we can easily understand when we look over groups of pictures as now exhibited at the World's Fair. And I think that the work of Julian Rix might



“WHEN THE TIDE IS OUT.”



"OLD OCEAN'S WRATH."

be picked out—as illustrating the fact that the expression of a national feeling does not necessarily involve the acceptance of any hampering conventions.

Mr. Rix is a landscapist who represents our wholesomest traditions modified by a strong personal and modern touch. This is said with a full understanding that it is saying a good deal. In an era when there is a tendency toward freakishness in landscape as well as in figure themes, and when there are not a few inducements to that sort of thing, Mr. Rix has kept his head clear, and his purpose well in hand. He quite evidently appreciates the value of holding fast to that which is good in art expression, while acknowledging and wisely yielding to

purely personal impulses toward original methods. It doesn't make much difference whether we class a man as a conservative or a radical in art, if we admit that that which is purely individual governs all; and I think we can say this about Julian Rix.

Two facts are quite apparent in Mr. Rix's work—that he has studied many of nature's moods, and that he has observed closely. His pictures show no tendency to repetition. They each express a distinct idea. This flash of moonlight, this bit of the river, this sand sketch at low tide, this drenched road in the storm, this bleak vista in the pines, each has its own idea, its own story. Each thus declares that the artist is not making the picture the excuse for duplicating either a jaded decorative sentiment or a narrow theory of natural charm, but rather that, taking



"WINTER'S MANTLE."

art to be, not the reflection of nature but the expression of ideas about nature, the painter has taken many phases as voicing nature's widely ranging symphony.

I do not mean to say that Mr. Rix has formulated any definite theory of this kind. Most of the strong men in any art are found explaining what they do by a

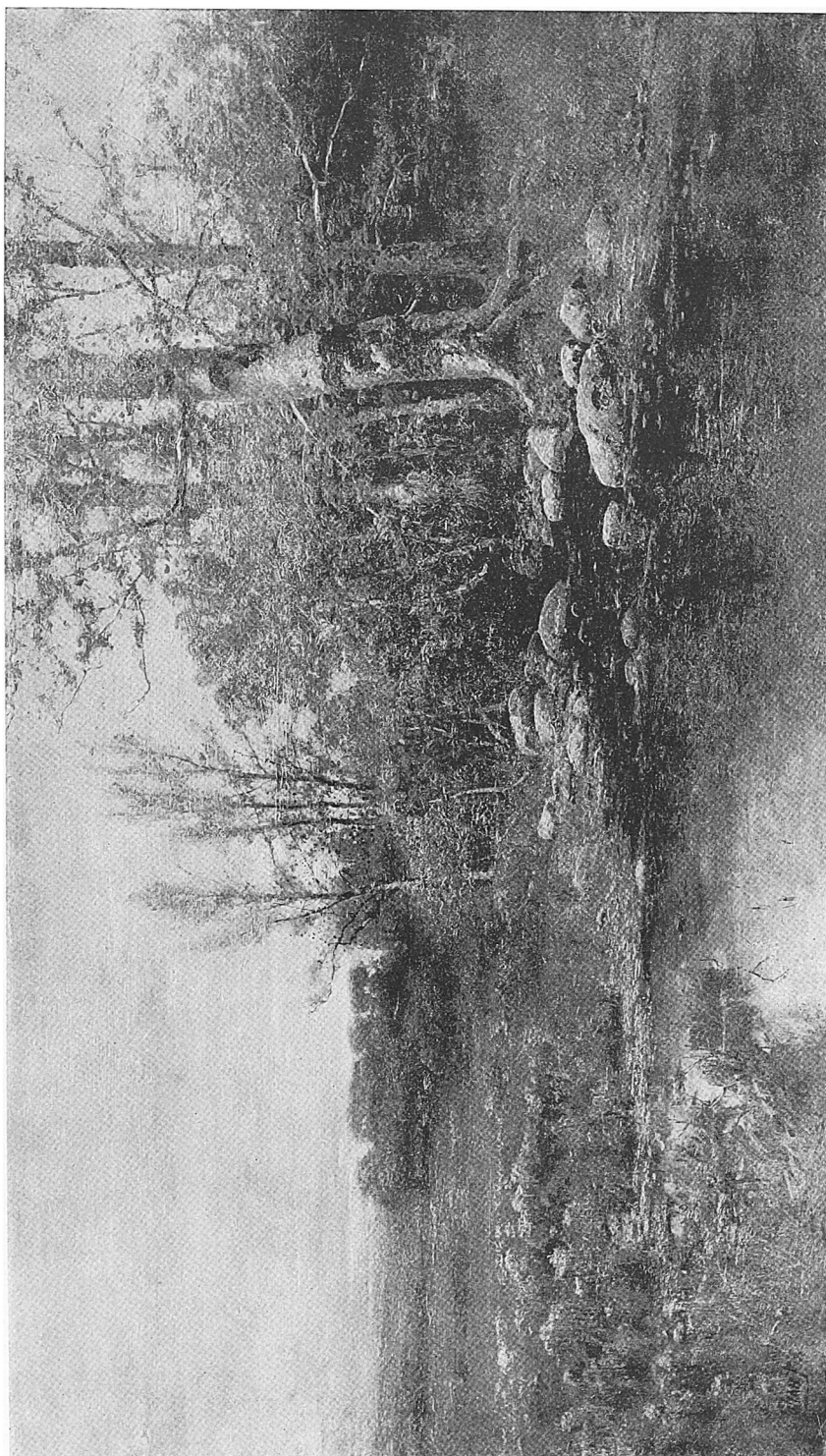
theory, rather than following a preconceived notion of requirements. Theories come lagging along after the impulses. Mr. Rix strikes out in a fresh, energetic, masterful way that is very enjoyable to the onlooker. He always knows what he is after and goes straight to the mark. Moreover, he tells one story at a time. The transcripts accompanying the present article are sufficient to illustrate the presence of this quality in Mr. Rix's work. The brook at the edge of the woodland is a simple story in which our attention is not distracted by any conflicting elements. The moonlight on the beach is firmly and broadly expressed. The



"SILENCE."



"MOONLIGHT."



"THE DROUSE OF NOONTIDE."

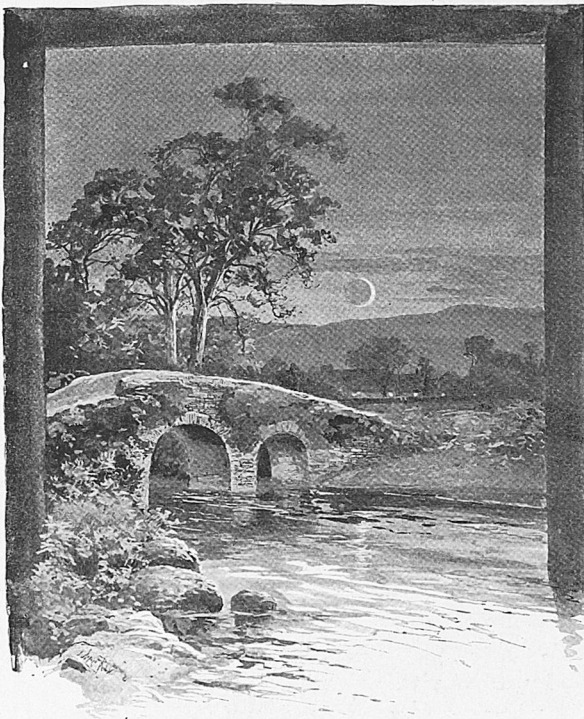
stream stealing through the valley exhibits a well-centred simplicity that leaves the color to exert its fullest charm. The schooner sleeping at low tide is the central element of a picture admirably terse yet unsensational in its style. Everything in the artist's treatment of the subject tends to emphasize the effect of quietude, of peace. The same feeling is very differently set down in the stretch of water across which the soft sunlight falls until it reaches the old skiff with its nose in the tall grass. There is something delightfully summery about this study, something tranquil and alluring. In his river scene Mr. Rix uses the few elements—sky, water, schooner, a stretch of sand, and an ancient pier head—with



"WINTER IN THE WOODS."

highly interesting directness, and with a lively sense of the character in each element. But in addition to all this, in the interpretation of winter moods Mr. Rix shows not less sagacity and feeling. The crisp touch which he knows so well how to use with good effect is here well placed.

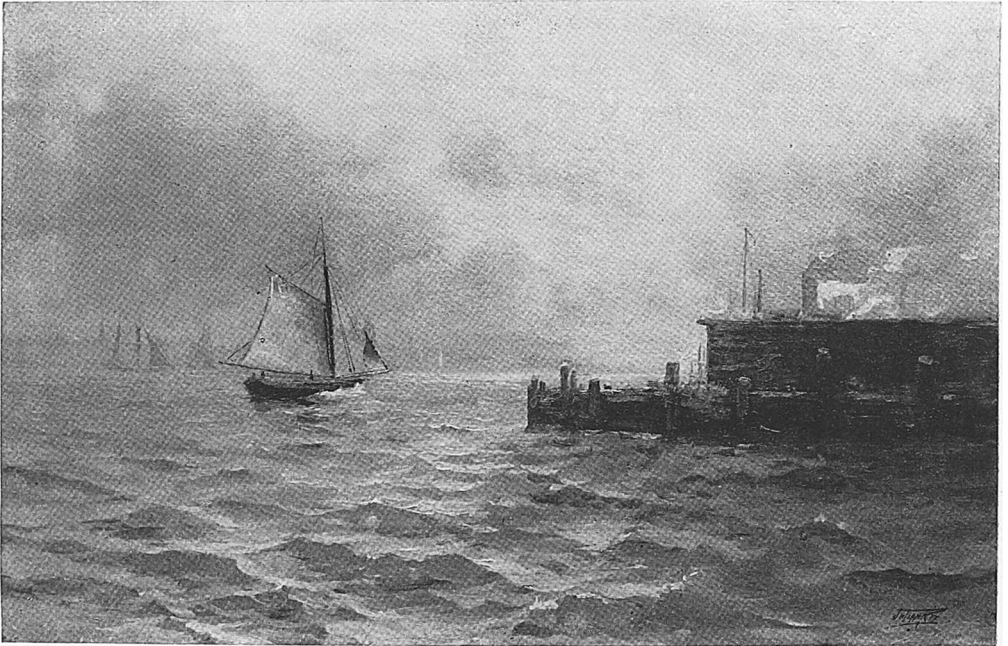
In fact, Mr. Rix's pictures remind us that it is the power not merely to observe but to read nature that gives significance to art. It is the power behind the eye that brings us the eloquence. Mr. Rix delights in a storm, in a scene which shows nature aroused. He displays rare dramatic tact in arranging the material of such a scene as comes, for example, with an atmospheric row in the



"A RUSTIC BRIDGE."

Rockies, when the old trees are groaning and the bowlders are crashing through the brush and over the cliffs into the valleys below.

It is this keen sense of the dramatic, as well as his feeling for the decorative, that has added materially to Mr. Rix's success as an illustrator. Work in black and white is greatly dependent upon its decorative interest, a circumstance which may explain why every successful artist is not capable of being a successful illustrator. Mr. Rix uses water color with a facility and a felicity that make his wash drawings singularly attractive, and make his success as an illustrator seem easy to him. He accentuates discreetly, and has a versatility that enables him to use a different brush dialect, if we might put it that way, for each theme. His style is distinctive; no painter escapes, nor wishes to escape, from a manner personal to himself. But he is as free from the suspicion of mere mannerism as any painter with whose



"ON THE EAST RIVER, NEW YORK."

work I am acquainted. He is always pictorial, and, as even the most casual study of the outward and visible signs may tell us, he is always refreshingly candid.

He goes directly at the heart of his subject, and extracts from a collection of general natural facts the best elements that compose gracefully on canvas. One cannot remember just how broadly or how thinly any of Mr. Rix's pictures were painted, but then one cannot forget the deep enchantment they exercised over the senses; and this power to excite emotion, it would seem, is after all the final test of art.

NOTE.—The artist whose work is here reviewed is known in the world of art chiefly as a painter of American landscapes, though he has travelled in most foreign lands and found an abundance of rich material for his brush wherever inclination has led him. Nothing in the way of landscapic charm, however, bids so strongly for his best effort as the scenery of our own country. Not

because he is an ardent patriot, and not because he believes there is nought that is worthy in other lands, does Mr. Rix persistently present the varied aspects of local scenery. It is rather because he has become convinced through much experience that American landscape is the most diversified, the most luxuriantly strengthful, and the most attractive from a purely pictorial viewpoint, that he has set his palette for native motives, and confines his search for the beautiful in nature to home attractions.

Sensitive to the charms of woodland and seashore, Mr. Rix is not afraid to portray the commonplace scenes of a commerce-clogged river front, or the peculiar picturesqueness of wharfage and shipping. An example of the artist's power to infuse art value in a view of but ordinary worth in nature, is well shown on page 186 of this number, where a pier, some heavy boats, and a clouded sky make up a picture of real beauty. From the interior of New Jersey Mr. Rix has obtained many of his choicest effects. He has sketched in the Black Forest of Germany and painted on the dikes of Holland, but nowhere abroad has he found such a wealth of foliage or so many vistas tempting to the true artist as in the lowlands and hills of Jersey. The rugged scenery of California engaged the brush of Mr. Rix for many years, and his early reputation was founded on his stirring delineations of wild Western landscapes. For the greater part of the year Mr. Rix lives in the open, painting direct from nature. His home is in New York, and his studio is one of the cosiest in the big metropolis.—Ed.



"THE THUNDERSTORM."



"SILVER AND GREEN."